THE ARTIST'S LIBRARY

VAN DYCK

By LIONEL CUST

Part II.

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VAN DYCK

BY LIONEL CUST, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

IN TWO PARTS
PART TWO

LONDON MCMIII
AT THE SIGN OF THE UNICORN

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VIII

With his return to Antwerp the third epoch in Van Dyck's career may be said to commence. He had left Antwerp some six or seven years before, a young man, whose fame as an artist was not yet separable from his connection with Rubens. He returned, as it were, the spoilt child of Fortune, ready to break a lance with his great master, at all events to throw down the gauntlet to any painter of his own age. As a historical-painter he had achieved striking success, as a portrait-painter he had proved himself unsurpassable. Undismayed by the flouts and jeers of his compatriot artists, he had established himself as a "gentleman" among artists. He not only challenged Rubens upon the field of art, but he attempted to rival him in the sumptuousness of his surroundings and the circumstances of his life.

It is difficult to follow Van Dyck's steps upon his homeward journey. It is easy to suppose that he would have hastened his return on hearing of the dangerous illness of his sister, Cornelia, who died in the Béguinage at Antwerp in September 1627. It has been suggested, not without some good ground, that before finally settling at Antwerp again, Van Dyck paid a second visit to England, in the hopes of obtaining the patronage of the new king, Charles I., and resided a short time in London as the guest of his friend, George Geldorp, in Drury Lane. It is very possible that he may have been persuaded to do so by his old friends, the Earl and Countess of Arundel, and that he painted fresh portraits of them there, including perhaps the large family group, which was never carried out, but the design for which is preserved on a small scale in a water-colour copy by Philipp Fruytiers. Neither the Earl nor the Countess of Arundel was in high favour at Court,

and there is nothing to shew that Charles I.'s attention was directed to Van Dyck until five years later. A tradition has been handed down by George Vertue, the engraver, who had it from one of Van Dyck's own pupils, that he was persuaded to come to England by the great Duke of Buckingham, who was passing through Antwerp on his return from an embassy, and sat to both Rubens and Van Dyck for his portrait. Buckingham appears however only once to have been in the Netherlands, when on a visit to The Hague in November 1625, concerning a treaty with the King of Denmark. No portrait moreover of Buckingham has ever been credited to Van Dyck, who could hardly have missed the opportunity of painting so brilliant and attractive a personage as the royal favourite. In 1628 Buckingham was dead by the assassin's knife. In the Royal Picture Gallery at The Hague there is a portrait of a man, dated 1627, who from his armorial bearings has been somewhat dubiously identified with a member of the *Sheffield* family. If this man be really a Sheffield, he may be that Lord Sheffield, who was governor of Brielle in Holland. Supposing that Van Dyck returned to Antwerp by way of the Rhine and Rotterdam, it is possible that he was the guest at Rotterdam of an old Antwerp friend and brother-painter, *Hendrik Du Bois*, whose portrait, together with that of his wife, *Elena Trompers*, Van Dyck painted. These two portraits were lately in the possession of the Earl of Hardwicke at Wimpole, but are now divorced by fate as far apart as Frankfort-on-the-Main and Chicago.

The companion portrait to the so-called Sheffield at The Hague is a remarkably fine portrait of a lady, who from a contemporary engraving is known to represent *Anna Wake*, probably a member of a family of English merchants, then resident in Antwerp. As it is dated 1628, it must have been painted in Antwerp, for on March 6 of that year Van Dyck was there, and made his will leaving his goods to his sister, Susanna, the *béguine*, and giving instructions that his body should be buried in the Antwerp Béguinage. In this will he mentions an illegitimate daughter, Maria Theresa, but no indication is given as to her birth.

Van Dyck now took up his position at Antwerp, as a famous and fashionable painter, and commissions poured in upon him from all sides. On May 18 he was visited in his own house by

the gay English nobleman, the Earl of Carlisle, who met Rubens there. This is some proof that rivalry had not impaired the friendship between Rubens and Van Dyck.

Van Dyck also obtained the patronage of the Regent of the Netherlands, *Isabella Clara Eugenia*, the daughter of Philip II. of Spain, and widow of the Archduke Albert of Austria. After the death of her husband in 1621 the Regent Isabella entered the order of the nuns of St. Clara. She appointed Van Dyck her Court-painter, and he painted several portraits of her in her religious dress. Many versions of this admirable portrait exist, in which the stern and shrewd but not unpleasing features of Philip's daughter are thus represented at the close of her long and eventful life. These portraits are for the most part of unvarying excellence, whether the full-length at Turin, the three-quarter lengths at the Louvre, and in the collection of the Earl of Hopetoun in Scotland, or the bust in the picture-gallery at Parma. They were probably presentation portraits to the Regent's relatives and the work of Van Dyck's own hands. The cold black and white of the nun's dress give the key to Van Dyck's skilful treatment of black in the numerous portraits painted by him at Antwerp during the next few years.

It is to an early period after the return of Van Dyck from Italy that one is inclined to ascribe certain fine portraits of Flemish personages, some of them full-lengths, which must have been painted in Antwerp. These portraits, such as those of *M. Vinck* (M. Schollaert at Louvain), *Madame Vinck* (M. Paul Dansette at Brussels), *Anna Maria de Schodt* (Messrs. Laurie & Co., London), the portrait of *A Syndic* (Mme. Edouard André at Paris) and others, are dressed in the Flemish costume characteristic of a few years earlier. They are however so broad in their treatment, so rich in their colouring, so much more imposing in their conception, that they seem to belong to a period when the painter's hand had been strengthened by his Italian experience. At the same time it is difficult to separate them from the earlier portraits of the Rubens period alluded to before.

Van Dyck had not however as yet resigned himself to the simple position of a portrait-painter. He still sought to rival Rubens, as a painter of religion, mythology, and history. His family had long been connected with the Church, one sister being a nun, and three *béguines*, and his only surviving brother was a

priest of the Premonstratensian order. Van Dyck himself, although addicted to a life of pleasure and luxury, had strong leanings to religion, and was in May 1628 affiliated to the Superior Confraternity of Celibates, which had been founded at Antwerp by the Jesuits. It was for this confraternity that Van Dyck painted two of his finest pictures, *The Mystic Marriage of the Blessed Herman* (1630) and *The Crowning of St. Rosalia by the Infant Christ* (1629), which pictures ornamented the refectory of the Confraternity of Jesus until its suppression in 1776, when they were both annexed by the Empress Maria Theresa, and removed to Vienna, where they now hang in the Imperial Gallery.

During the next few years, in addition to his many portraits, Van Dyck painted a series of large Church pictures, which if they do not add any particular laurels to his fame, at all events deserve to rank among the most important works in this branch of painting. It is characteristic of Van Dyck's adaptable genius, that on returning to his native land, he should have laid aside the mantle of Titian and re-assumed that of Rubens. It may be alleged that in either case, certainly in that of Rubens, the mantle proved a giant's robe to Van Dyck. Rubens had already perceived that the rich warm sunset tones of the Venetian painters would be ineffective under the leaden skies of the north, and amid the vast soaring pillars of the Gothic churches. Something in a brighter, gayer tone of colour was required, something that received and reflected light, rather than gave it out from itself. This may be well seen in the case of Rubens's great pictures at the Cathedral at Antwerp. Van Dyck naturally sought to follow his master in this line, but as he could never shake off his Italian influence, and a decided preference for blacks and grays, which he shared with his great contemporary, Velazquez, and as moreover he was lacking in invention and inspiration, and not always ashamed to appropriate his master's designs, his great Church paintings have met with less appreciation than they deserve.

Yet these paintings have great merits, discernible even when neglect or ignorant restoration has wrecked them beyond recall. For one thing Van Dyck, though his life outside his art was luxurious and worldly, had been brought up under powerful religious influences. To his father, his brother the priest, his sisters the nuns or *béguines*, he was sincerely attached. To

Rubens the incidents of the Passion were little more than interesting subjects for academic studies and physiognomical expression. To Van Dyck however they appeared as scenes of poignant reality. Christ, as painted by Van Dyck, especially at Antwerp, is a true Sufferer. His pain and torments before or during the Crucifixion, the pathos of his death and burial (the *Nood Gods* as the Flemish title goes), are charged with painful reality of feeling. Tears run down the Virgin Mother's cheeks, the very angels are agonised, as in the paintings of the 14th or 15th century. The Infant Christ is represented in tender and engaging variety, though the divine inspiration seems lacking, which should distinguish him from those boy-angels or *amorini*, in which Van Dyck so much excelled.

One of those important pictures was due to the fulfilment of a pious duty. Van Dyck's father had died during his son's absence in Italy. During his last illness he had been cared for by the Dominican nuns, and he had left a dying wish, that his son should repay their services. Van Dyck therefore painted as a gift to the Church of the Dominican Nuns a *Christ on the Cross with St. Dominick and St. Catherine of Siena*; this picture, though it has the appearance of an earlier date, does not appear to have been delivered before 1629. It is now in t' . Museum at Antwerp, and bears an inscription, which would seem to denote some remorse of the painter at having neglected to carry out his father's dying injunctions.

One of the earliest paintings of importance by Van Dyck after his return from Italy is usually reckoned *Christ on the Cross with the Virgin, St. Mary Magdalene, and St. Francis*, painted for the great church at Termonde (or Dendermonde). In this picture and the great *Crucifixion*, painted for the Church of St. Michel at Ghent, Van Dyck recalls not only his Italian experience, but the works of his youth. To these may be added the interesting *Crucifixion*, now belonging to Prior Park College at Bath. The great picture of *St. Augustine in Ecstasy*, painted for the Church of St. Augustine in Antwerp, shews the unmistakeable influence of the Carracci and the Bolognese School. More immediately influenced by Rubens are the famous *Elevation of the Cross*, painted for the Church of Notre Dame at Courtray, which with all its excellencies, so much extolled by Sir Joshua Reynolds, is little more than a repetition of the more renowned picture of the

same subject by Rubens in the Cathedral at Antwerp, and the great *Crucifixion* now in the Church of St. Rombant at Malines, which is again a mere adaptation from the great *Crucifixion* by Rubens, now in the Gallery at Antwerp. Of the smaller *Crucifixions* at this date, the most noteworthy perhaps is the *Christ on the Cross with St. Francis*, now in the Ryksmuseum at Amsterdam. The subject of *The Lamentation of Christ* (the *Pietá* or *Nood Gods*) was a favourite one with Van Dyck. Of this subject the most noteworthy examples are the great painting, executed for the Béguinage at Antwerp and now in the Gallery at Antwerp, and that now in the Gallery at Berlin. The former picture is said by tradition to contain in the St. Mary Magdalene a portrait of Van Dyck's sister Susanna, the *béguine*, at whose instigation it was painted. The same figure, however, with flowing golden hair, clad in white satin, occurs in most instances where St. Mary Magdalene is introduced, and although the pretty story is not impossible or even improbable, the figure seems to have been derived from an earlier model of Rubens.

The composition of these two great paintings at Antwerp and Berlin shew an affinity to the great *St. Martin* at Windsor Castle, and suggest that this was painted now in 1629, as a repetition of the famous picture at Saventhem, perhaps as a commission for the King of Spain. A repetition, also with emendations of *The Crowning with Thorns*, seems to be painted at the time for the same monarch, who placed it with other paintings by Van Dyck in the Escorial. Van Dyck's poverty of imagination and want of constructive genius led him easily to constant repetition. The same motives of the *Virgin in Lament*, the same weeping boy-angels in the sky, the sun in eclipse, all recur frequently, most of them reminiscences from Titian. He frequently repeated his whole compositions, usually however with sufficient variations to enable them to rank as separate pictures. In these repetitions he no doubt was aided by his assistants after the manner of Rubens, though he never approached his master's stupendous wealth of invention and marvellous powers of so interpreting them to others, as to enable his compositions to be carried out as if by his own hand.

IX

Van Dyck returned to Antwerp, if not, as he hoped and believed, one of the greatest of historical-painters, at all events with a reputation well established as one of the greatest living portrait-painters. The very numerous portraits of his contemporaries which he produced at this date shew the painter perhaps at the zenith of his powers. Very soon after his return he discarded the sumptuous splendour of his Genoese portraits with their gorgeous robes and romantic aspect, and reverted without any apparent difficulty to the more sober figures and costumes of his fellow-countrymen. It is just this lack of splendid accessories, which make the portraits of that period so remarkable. The quaint ruffs and bodices have gone out of fashion, and there is little to allure and captivate the eye. The quiet simple dresses, most frequently of black, the white lace falling collars, which had replaced the stiff ruffs of a few years before, do nothing to divert the eye from the consummate skill with which the actual portraits are executed, the elegant and happy pose, the fine modelling of the head and hands, the character so well interpreted, if somewhat idealised, the whole infused with a touch of poetry. Whether he is painting the grandees of the Spanish Court, the officials, burghers, amateurs or artists in his native city, Van Dyck never fails to ennoble, without however ceasing to convince.

Take for instance the portrait of his friend, the painter *Snyders*, whether alone, as at Castle Howard, or with his wife, as at Cassel. What could be more refined or interesting than this delicate sympathetic face, so delicate indeed that one could hardly connect it with those vigorous paintings of animals, which were the speciality of Snyders? Van Dyck was especially successful, in

Van Dyck was however by no means supreme at Antwerp; and he encountered here as elsewhere the jealousy of other painters. Rubens still towered over him, and, though they were excellent friends, it is reasonable to suppose that Van Dyck's ambition would hardly be satisfied with a position of inferiority to anybody. He therefore accepted an invitation to the Court of the Prince of Orange in Holland, where he painted the prince, *Frederick Henry*, more than once (the best version being that at Wörlitz), and his wife *Amalia de Solms*, a great patroness of painters. At this Court also he painted as boys the young Bavarian princes and Counts Palatine, *Charles Louis* and *Rupert*, the sons of the exiled and whilom Queen of Bohemia, these portraits, now at Vienna, being among his most successful interpretations of high-bred youth. It was probably also upon this journey that Van Dyck paid a visit, a visit based on good tradition, to another famous portrait-painter, Frans Hals, at Haarlem; and judging from other portraits, he also made personal acquaintance with other rivals in his art such as Michiel van Miereveldt, Jan van Ravesteyn, and Jan Livens. The latter's fellow-student, Rembrandt, had as yet hardly made himself famous as a portrait-painter, but it may perhaps be admissible to trace in the portraits of Rembrandt's fashionable period something of the elegance and grand air introduced by Van Dyck.

Van Dyck was back in Antwerp in May 1631, for on the 10th of that month he stood sponsor in the Church of St. George to a daughter of Lucas Vorsterman, the engraver. In the following September occurred the visit of Marie de' Medicis mentioned above. The painter was now in the plenitude of his powers, and serious and definite attempts seem to have been made to persuade him to transfer himself to the Court of Charles I.

Various reasons have been assigned to account for Van Dyck taking this step. Charles I. is said, as might well be supposed, to have himself sought to attach the painter to his Court, in spite of the opposition of the Court-painters then in vogue, Daniel Mytens and Cornelis Janssen Van Ceulen. A tradition, that it was the Duke of Buckingham who persuaded him to come to England, must refer to an earlier visit and has been alluded to before.

An interesting correspondence has been preserved between the Lord Treasurer Weston, afterwards Earl of Portland, and that

shifty intriguer, Sir Balthasar Gerbier, who, under the cloak of a painter and amateur, concealed his real avocation of a spy. From these letters, which cover a period from December 1631 to March 1632, it appears that Weston ordered through Gerbier a picture of *The Virgin and Child with St. Catherine* by Van Dyck to give to the King. Besides obtaining this picture, Gerbier seems to have taken on himself to try and persuade Van Dyck to go to England, and had recourse to the good offices of the Regent and of Marie de' Medicis, mother of Queen Henrietta Maria, in order to accomplish this. Meanwhile Geldorp, Van Dyck's friend in London, appears to have kept Van Dyck informed of Gerbier's intrigue, and further to have alleged that the picture sent by Gerbier to Weston was false. Van Dyck therefore decided not to go to England as arranged, carrying portraits of the Regent and the Queen-mother as presents to the Queen of England. In March however his mind was again changed, and Gerbier says that Van Dyck was determined to go, although it seems to have been now through Geldorp's agency, *ce cacquetteur de Geldorp* as Gerbier calls him. Pressure was doubtless brought to bear upon Van Dyck by other agents of the King, such as Endymion Porter, or Lanier, or by the man with whom he was to be so close a friend, the famous Sir Kenelm Digby. Whatever the inducement was, by 1st April 1632 Van Dyck was settled in London, and the third epoch of his career was at an end.

X

Anthony Van Dyck had just completed the thirty-second year of his age, when he arrived to settle in England. Charles I. received him with every possible distinction. He was given a pension of £200 per annum, to be paid quarterly, and some allusion is probable to Van Dyck's former breach of contract with James I. in the addition in the grant of the words, "any restraint formerly made by our late dear Father, or by us, for payment or allowance of Pensions or Annuities or any Declaration, Signification, Matter or Thing to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding." His board and household necessities were entrusted to Edward Norgate, one of the clerks of the Signet, fifteen shillings a day being allotted. A house was found for him in the Black Friars, looking out over the Thames, the famous architect, Inigo Jones, being consulted in the matter, and apartments for the summer were assigned to the painter in the Royal Palace at Eltham in Kent. Charles and Henrietta Maria lost no time in sitting to Van Dyck for their portraits, and a special landing-stage was erected to allow of the royal party passing easily to the painter's house. On 5th July 1632 Van Dyck was knighted at St. James's Palace, and the King bestowed on him a heavy gold chain with the King's portrait in little set in brilliants.

Van Dyck had hardly any competitors in England. Daniel Mytens, a competent and useful painter, whose merits have been unduly neglected, on being shewn by the King a specimen of Van Dyck's painting, at once recognised the enormous gulf which separated the two artists, and craved the King's leave, in spite of the royal protest, to retire to his native country, though he does not appear to have been permitted to do so at once. The other

painter, who might have been a rival to Van Dyck, Cornelis Janssen Van Ceulen, had never enjoyed the favour of the Court, and was mainly employed in painting admirable portraits of the nobility and gentry throughout England. He continued to practise with uninterrupted success until the outbreak of the civil wars, when he also departed for Holland. It is a commonplace to rank Cornelis Janssen (Johnson or Jonson he called himself in England) among the imitators of Van Dyck. There is little to support this in Janssen's work, and it may even be asserted that the influence was exercised in exactly the opposite way. Van Dyck found the English schooled on the one hand to the *portraits d'apparat* of Van Somer and Mytens, the lineal descendants in art of the ruffs, farthingales, and peascod doublets of the Elizabethan time, and on the other to the delicate and refined impersonations of Cornelis Janssen, who, a Londoner by birth, had initiated a style of his own. Van Dyck with his magnificent powers of assimilation appropriated and developed both styles, especially that of Cornelis Janssen, which he found much to his liking, and thus met and vanquished both Mytens and Janssen upon their own ground.

From the Privy Seal Warrants it appears that on August 1632 Van Dyck was paid for divers pictures, made and presented to the King, including *Monsieur the French King's brother* (Gaston of Orleans), *The Archdutchesse at length* (the Regent Isabella), *The Prince of Orange, the Princesse, and their son, at half-length*, all of which he had brought over with him from Antwerp. He had also painted *Our ane royall portraiture, our royall consort, and one greate piece of our royal self, consort, and children.* The last picture, for which Van Dyck received £100, is the famous family piece at Windsor. Van Dyck was also employed by the King to repair the head of *Galba* in Titian's famous series of *The Twelve Cæsars*, and to paint a new portrait of *Vitellius* to replace one of the set which had been hopelessly damaged.

In the following May Van Dyck was paid £444 for nine pictures of the King and Queen "lately made by him," in October £40 for a portrait of *Queen Henrietta Maria* given by the King to Viscount Wentworth, then Lord Deputy of Ireland; this is evidently the full-length portrait of the Queen with Geoffrey Hudson, the dwarf, now with other famous portraits of Strafford and his family in the possession of Earl Fitzwilliam. All these payments were in addition to Van Dyck's pension.

It must have been at this time that Van Dyck was so closely associated with *Sir Kenelm Digby*, and his fair wife, *Venetia Stanley*. Van Dyck painted Digby several times, before and after the death of his wife Venetia, which occurred in May 1633. He painted a superb allegorical picture of Venetia Digby, as *Prudence* (now at Windsor), evidently ordered by Digby to confute those who cast aspersions upon his wife's honour. He also painted Digby and his wife in a group with their children, and after the lady's death was called in to portray her on her deathbed. Furthermore Bellori, the historian, was given by Digby himself, in later years at Rome, not only an account of Van Dyck at the English Court, but also a list of the subject pictures, in addition to portraits, painted for Digby by Van Dyck, including a large *Deposition from the Cross*, and *Judith and Holofernes*.

In March 1634 Van Dyck returned to Antwerp, his object being apparently to settle his affairs there, especially concerning a purchase of landed property, with a view to a prolonged though not a permanent residence in England. He appointed his sister Susanna to take temporary power to administer his affairs. That he did not intend to settle permanently in England is shewn by the fact that he did not take out letters of denization; and he is scheduled in a list of Aliens resident in London in 1634 as "Sir Anthony Vandike Limner 2 years. 6 servants." In October 1634 he was elected *honoris causâ* Dean of the Guild of St. Luke at Antwerp. He lingered however for a year or so in the Netherlands, probably owing to the arrival of the new Regent, the Cardinal Infant, *Don Ferdinand of Austria*, who had succeeded upon Isabella Clara Eugenia's death, and entered Brussels in state on November 4, 1634. Van Dyck painted more than one portrait of the young prince (one of the best is in the Prado Gallery at Madrid), and the revival of gaieties at the Austrian Court offered an inducement to him to remain. His sitters at this time were chiefly exalted personages such as the two sisters, *Marguérite de Lorraine*, *Duchesse d'Orléans*, and *Henriette*, *Princesse de Phalsbourg*, at full-length, and also a full-length portrait of the former lady's husband, *Gaston*, *Duc d'Orléans*, of whom he had painted a smaller portrait before. Among other notabilities painted by him was the veteran *John*, *Count of Nassau-Siegen*, both in a group with his family, as in the immense painting at Panshanger, and alone at full-length in armour, as in the

Liechtenstein Collection at Vienna. One of Van Dyck's most splendid paintings is the equestrian portrait of *Prince Thomas of Savoie-Carignan* (now at Turin), of whom he also painted a half-length in armour (at Berlin). To this year also may be given the immense equestrian portrait of *Albert, Duc d'Arenberg* (at Holkham). Now also he seems to have executed a great painting for the Town Hall at Brussels, representing the magistrates of the city in session, which was unfortunately destroyed by fire during the siege of Brussels by the French troops in 1695.

XI

Van Dyck does not appear to have returned to England until late in 1635, and for the next five years he was in full request in London. He was constantly employed by Charles I., and his portraits of the King and Queen are very numerous, it being in many cases difficult to distinguish the originals from the still more numerous copies or new editions made of them after Van Dyck's death. Charles I. has been made immortal in history through his portraits by Van Dyck, and has impressed the susceptibility of posterity in a way which probably would not have been the case had only his earlier portraits by Mytens been preserved. The most famous portraits of the King are *Charles I. on horseback attended by M. St. Antoine* (Windsor and Hampton Court), based it would appear on Van Dyck's earlier portrait of the Marchese Brignole-Sala at Genoa; the great equestrian portrait of the King, which the great Duke of Marlborough acquired at Munich and brought with him back to Blenheim ("It was the Elector of Bavaria's," Marlborough wrote to his Duchess, "and given to the Emperor"), now in the National Gallery; the famous *Le Roi à la Chasse* now in the new room in the Louvre, where it holds its own among the masterpieces of all times and schools; the full-length in Garter Robes in St. George's Hall at Windsor Castle; the famous head in three positions (at Windsor), painted about 1637 to be sent to the sculptor Bernini, from which Bernini made the celebrated bust, which perished in the fire at Whitehall; *Charles I. in armour with a helmet* (at Arundel Castle), and *Charles I. in the habit of St. George* (at Dresden, where it is said to be a copy by Lely from the original, which was destroyed at Whitehall). Van Dyck is said

to have painted the King thirty-six times. A well-known portrait of *Charles I. receiving a myrtle wreath from Henrietta Maria* is in the collection of the Duke of Grafton at Euston.

The portraits of the Queen, Henrietta Maria, are almost as numerous—five-and-twenty Van Dyck is said to have painted—though more difficult to distinguish, the same portrait occurring in several slightly different forms. Among the best are the full-lengths at Windsor and in the collection of Lord Clarendon, the two bust portraits (at Windsor) said to have been executed for Bernini to make a companion bust from, a similar bust in profile, belonging to the Earl of Denbigh; the three-quarter length in black at Longford Castle, a similar picture in blue at Dresden, and the often-repeated portrait in white with pink ribbons (the best belongs to the Marquess of Lansdowne), based upon the figure in the group with the myrtle wreath mentioned above.

One of the most fascinating tasks set to Van Dyck upon his return to England in 1635 was to portray the children of Charles and Henrietta Maria. The painter was always at his best, when painting children, and he did not fail to make use of his opportunities. The first group painted was that of the three eldest children, *Charles*, a boy of five, *Mary afterwards Princess of Orange*, and *James, Duke of York*, an infant of two. The earliest group of these three children is the matchless picture now in the Royal Gallery at Turin, unsurpassed as a painting with its delicate, silvery and shimmering tints, and also agreeable as a composition. This was followed rapidly by another group of the same three children with two toy-spaniel dogs; this picture, the original of which is at Windsor Castle, though of high merit, is not so pleasingly composed as that at Turin. In 1637 Van Dyck painted the children again, now increased to five through the births of *Princess Elizabeth* and *Princess Anne*, who died an infant, just having lived long enough to have her baby figure immortalised by Van Dyck; the original of this picture is also at Windsor Castle, the composition being freer than the last, and pleasingly varied by the introduction of a large boarhound, round which the royal children are grouped. A year or so later he painted the boy prince Charles, at full-length in armour, a portrait of which versions exist at Windsor, Madrid, and elsewhere.

During the next few years Van Dyck was occupied in portraying the lords and ladies of the English Court to such an extent,

that, as Horace Walpole said, "His works are so frequent in this country that the generality of our people can scarcely avoid thinking him their countryman." It was indeed a glorious opportunity for so chivalrous a painter. The Court of Charles I. was a mixture of brilliancy and sobriety. Whatever faults Charles may have had as a politician and a ruler of his subjects, it is undeniable that he was the most refined and cultivated sovereign, who has ever governed this country. His private life was unimpeachable, as was that of his queen. The trials, that beset Charles, were rather inherited than caused by him. No painter has had so large a share in making history as Van Dyck. Titian arrested some flying moments and made them immortal, Velazquez revealed with a pitiless truth and audacity, more characteristic of the nineteenth than the seventeenth century, the weakness and ineptitude of the later Hapsburgs, but these royal personages left no mark upon history. No person, however prejudiced, can read the sad pages of English history at this date without seeing before him the melancholy dignity of Charles, the *mignonne* figure of his queen, with her familiar curls around her forehead, while about them stand those splendid figures of the men and women in their silk and satin, their ribands and feathers, who in a few short years were to fight, die, or intrigue in the struggle between the divine right of kings and the human rights of a governed people. As they pass before our eyes on the canvases of Van Dyck, they seem unconscious of the gulf opening before their feet, and yet they have in their eyes that look of destiny or melancholy, which even the haughtiest or most disdainful among them can but hardly conceal, and which even communicates itself to the painter's own portraits of himself at this date.

XII

It was almost entirely within Court circles that Van Dyck's services were employed. Within these circles it is possible to distinguish certain groups of great families, groups connected by close relationship or intermarriage.

Nearest to the King came by nature his nephews, the dashing young knights, *Prince Charles Louis*, the Elector Palatine, and his younger brother, the celebrated *Rupert of the Rhine*. Van Dyck had painted them as boys at The Hague. He now painted them together in one splendid group, to-day in the Louvre, and in separate full-length portraits, preserved appropriately at Combe Abbey, their mother's old home and the seat of the Earl of Craven. Their younger brother, Maurice, does not appear to have sat to Van Dyck, and was not indeed in England at this date. Near to the King in relationship and also in affection were his Stuart cousins, the Duke of Richmond and Lenox and the Duke's brothers and sisters. *James, Duke of Richmond and Lenox*, was one of the noblemen most frequently portrayed by Van Dyck, the best-known portraits being that of the Duke in the habit of St. George with a favourite greyhound, of which picture many repetitions exist, and the well-known portrait of the Duke in his shirt, as Paris, now in the Louvre. His wife, *Mary Villiers*, daughter of the great Duke of Buckingham, was as often painted by Van Dyck as her husband. With them should be grouped the Duke's brothers, *George, Lord Aubigny*, *Lord John Stuart*, and *Lord Bernard Stuart*, all of whom fell in the civil wars. The double portrait of the last-named two brothers, always preserved at their former home, Cobham Hall, the seat of the Earl of Darnley, is one of Van Dyck's masterpieces.

Their sister, *the Countess of Portland*, also sat more than once to Van Dyck. Of the great families at Court the most conspicuous group perhaps was that of the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, and their connections, such as the Earl of Carnarvon. This group is chiefly remarkable for the immense family picture, still at Wilton House, of *Philip, Earl of Pembroke and his family*. The great Percy family too gave the painter much employment, and accounted for the fine series of portraits in the old seat of the Earls and Dukes of Northumberland at Petworth, now the seat of Lord Leconfield. To this group belong the portraits of the sprightly *Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle* and that of the brave *Algernon Percy, Earl of Northumberland* (at Alnwick Castle). Another great family was that of the Carys and the families related to them by marriage. The *Carys* had been prominent at Court since the days of Elizabeth, for they were descended from her mother's sister, Mary Boleyn. One of the family, Robert, Earl of Monmouth, had three children, Henry, Thomas, and Philadelphia. Henry, the elder son, became Earl of Monmouth, and married in 1619 Martha Cranfield, daughter of the Earl of Middlesex; one of his daughters, Anne, married the Earl of Clanbrassil, another Mary, the Earl of Denbigh, and a third Martha, the Earl of Middleton. Portraits of the members of this group are to be found in the collections of the Earl of Denbigh, the Earl of Radnor, and others. The second brother, Thomas Cary, married Margaret Smith, and had two daughters Philadelphia and Elizabeth, the younger of whom married John Mordaunt, and was ancestress of the Earls of Peterborough. The sister, Philadelphia Cary, married Sir Thomas Wharton, who died in 1622, and was the mother of two sons, Philip, Lord Wharton, and Sir Thomas Wharton, K.B. *Philip, Lord Wharton*, was one of the handsomest men at Court. In 1632 at the age of nineteen he married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Rowland Wandesford, and it would appear that he celebrated the occasion by having his portrait painted by the new star in the art world, Sir Anthony Van Dyck. To this is due the famous portrait of him, in the dress of a shepherd, which is one of the chief glories of the collection at the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. He sat again to Van Dyck in 1539 for a full-length portrait, which passed from the Wharton Collection to that of Earl Cowper at Panshanger. Van Dyck probably painted the young Lady

Wharton, though her portrait has not survived, for he painted her father, *Sir Rowland Wandesford* (St. Petersburg) and Lord Wharton's mother, *Philadelphia Cary*. By this marriage Lord Wharton had only one daughter, Elizabeth, who married the famous general, Robert, Earl of Lindsey, whose descendants possess a replica of the famous portrait of Lord Wharton. A few years later in 1637 Lord Wharton married as a second wife *Jane Goodwin* (Chatsworth), daughter of *Arthur Goodwin* (Chatsworth) of Winchendon in Buckinghamshire, both of whom were painted by Van Dyck, as were also his second wife's mother, *Jane Wenman* (St. Petersburg), and Lord Wharton's brother, *Sir Thomas Wharton* (St. Petersburg). The two little girls, generally known as *Philadelphia and Elizabeth Wharton* (St. Petersburg), whom Van Dyck painted together, are almost certainly Philadelphia and Elizabeth Cary, mentioned above, whose mother, *Margaret Smith*, was painted more than once. The series of portraits of the Wharton family were installed in the great house built by the Duke of Wharton at Wooburn in Buckinghamshire. Upon the break-up of the Wharton family, they were purchased for the greater part by Sir Robert Walpole, who placed them at Houghton in Norfolk, whence part of them were sold with the bulk of the Houghton Collection to the Empress Catherine of Russia, and are now in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg.

The Russells form another group, chiefly at Woburn Abbey, consisting of *William, 4th Earl of Bedford*, whose wife was cousin to Margaret Smith, the wife of Thomas Cary, his son *William*, afterwards *5th Earl and 1st Duke of Bedford*, and his daughters *Margaret*, the wife of *James Hay, second Earl of Carlisle* (Hagley), and *Anne*, the wife of *George Digby, 1st Earl of Bristol*. The full-length double portrait of the young Lord Russell and his brother-in-law, Lord Digby, now at Althorp, ranks among Van Dyck's finest creations. The portrait also of the former's young wife, *Anne Carr*, daughter of the infamous pair, Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and his accomplice Frances Howard, is among the most charming of Van Dyck's female portraits: as they were married in 1637, the whole-length portrait at Woburn Abbey or the still more beautiful portrait at Petworth may have been painted to celebrate the occasion. With this group may also be reckoned the Huguenot lady, *Rachel de Ruvigny, Countess of*

Southampton, who elected to be painted as *Fortune seated on the globe*, as may be seen in the remarkable portrait at Panshanger, or the replica at Althorp. Her daughter, Rachel, became famous afterwards as the brave wife of the conspirator, William Lord Russell.

XIII

Among the conspicuous figures at Court, immortalised by Van Dyck, may be noted *Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford*, the victim of his own pride and of the King's feeble duplicity. The double portrait of Strafford and his secretary, at Wentworth Woodhouse, is one of the finest achievements of Van Dyck, both as a painting and a portrait, while the other portraits of the same statesman at full-length, one being in armour with a large dog, very nearly approach it in dignity. Another important figure was that of *Archbishop Laud*, the helpmate and fellow-sufferer of Strafford, whose portrait by Van Dyck is to be found at Lambeth Palace, Wentworth Woodhouse, and elsewhere.

The shadows of the civil wars had hardly begun to darken the horizon of the future, so that it was in the full splendour of their aristocratic pride and beauty, that the Cavaliers of the future sat or rather stood to Van Dyck for these portraits, that now rank among the pages of history. Standing as they do in robes of scarlet, or rich black, gay with ribbons and rosettes and jewels, with their feathered hats and great leather boots, these young English nobles seem yet to possess an undefinable look of melancholy, perhaps due to the thought of the spectator, who may reflect how nearly all of these splendid youths were to be cut off in their prime by that worst of all evils, a civil war. Among them were *Henry Rich, Earl of Holland*, *Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick*, and *Mountjoy Blount, Earl of Newport*, the two legitimate and the illegitimate sons of that famed Penelope, Lady Rich, whom Sir Philip Sidney worshipped as "Stella"; *William Cavendish, Earl and afterwards Duke of Newcastle; James, Duke of Hamilton*, who shared his sovereign's fate upon

the scaffold; *James, Earl of Derby*, who met with the same fate, and his wife, *Charlotte de la Tremoüille*, so soon to be famous for her heroic defence of Lathom House; *Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset*, hero of the bloody duel near Antwerp with Lord Bruce; the two boy-brothers *George and Francis Villiers*, sons of the great Duke of Buckingham, the elder so notorious later on as the second Duke, the younger as the brave and beautiful Francis Villiers, who gave up his life nobly with his back against a tree at an early stage in the civil wars; also their cousin the splendid *William Villiers, Viscount Grandison.*

Fair as were the ladies, young or mature, whom Van Dyck has handed down, *Dorothy Sidney, Countess of Sunderland* (the world-famous "Sacharissa"), whose portraits charm the spectator at Penshurst at Althorp, *Penelope, Lady Spencer*, at Althorp, *Anne Kirke* (Panshanger), *Anne Villiers* and *Lady Dalkeith*, Henrietta-Maria's ladies of the bed-chamber, *Diana, Countess of Oxford* (Madrid), *Elizabeth Howard, Countess of Peterborough*, with her companion leopard (Mrs. Elrington Bisset), *Catherine, Lady Stanhope*, with whom Van Dyck carried on an intrigue, and other beauties of their day, it must be confessed that, with all their charm, Van Dyck has given more heart to the painting of the young warriors mentioned above, than to flattering these sirens of the Court. In many of the later portraits of this English period, Van Dyck's handling is loose and careless, his drawing faulty, his dresses and hands too obviously the work of assistants. Considering the short time during which Van Dyck resided in England, some seven years or more at the most, it is wonderful to think what an immense amount of work he accomplished, even if it be granted that he had little time for employment except in the service of the Court, and the nobility and gentry who happened to be immediately connected with it.

Varying accounts have been handed down of Van Dyck's method of painting. Nicholas Lanier, whose portrait he painted at Genoa, told Sir Peter Lely that he had sat to Van Dyck for seven entire days, morning and evening, and that he was not allowed by Van Dyck to see the portrait at all until the painter was satisfied with it. This was, as has been stated before, during Van Dyck's residence in Genoa.

Bellori, in his account of Van Dyck, says that when Van Dyck was painting a portrait he began early in the morning, and

retained his sitters, whether nobleman or lady, to dine with him, so as not to interrupt his painting, returning to his work for a time after dinner. In this way he was able to study his sitters at their ease. When he was painting history-pieces, he measured out just as much as he could do in one day and no more. Bellori, who had many similar facts told him by Sir Kenelm Digby, also adds that Van Dyck made use of reflectors, screens, and other devices, and copied Rubens in his habit of seeking inspiration in the open air.

More definite information was given by Eberhard Jabach, a member of a rich banker's family at Antwerp. Jabach knew Van Dyck well, and was painted no less than three times by him. Up to 1636 Jabach was resident in Antwerp, and would naturally be a frequent visitor to Van Dyck's studio. Subsequently he travelled, visiting England for a time, until he finally settled in Paris, and laid the foundation of the collections which form the nucleus of that now in the Louvre. According to Jabach, Van Dyck in his earlier days studied hard for the sake of his reputation and also in order to acquire the rapidity of action requisite for one who depended for his livelihood upon his art. Van Dyck, said Jabach, gave fixed appointments for sittings, and never devoted more than one hour to any particular portrait. At the given moment the sitter was courteously dismissed and the next one introduced, while his servants changed his canvas and brushes. After sketching in a portrait Van Dyck posed his sitter as he desired, and then drew on gray paper in black and white chalk for a quarter of an hour studies of the figure and draperies. These he handed over to his pupils, who completed the figure on the canvas, which the painter then went over himself, correcting errors and giving the final touches of the master hand. In this way he was enabled to keep a great number of portraits in hand at the same time.

The mention of the studies on gray paper would seem to point to a late period in Van Dyck's career, when he was painting in England, since many such studies exist in the collections of drawings in the British Museum and elsewhere, all of which belong to his English period.

XIV

Splendid and privileged as was the position of Sir Anthony Van Dyck at the Court of Charles I., it was not without its disadvantages. The horizon began to darken with the coming storm of civil war. The royal exchequer became straitened, and payments to the royal household more and more irregular. Van Dyck kept open house at Blackfriars and Eltham. As a gallant he had many victims among the fair sex, ever prone to bestow their graces upon the favourite of the moment. To one lady, Catherine Wotton, Lady Stanhope, governess to the royal children, he paid special attentions, which seem to have been reciprocated, until a *gaucherie* on his part, relative to the cost of her portrait, made a breach between them. At all events one fair lady, Margaret Lemon by name, ruled his household. Work, banquets, and women drained Van Dyck's resources and exhausted his bodily strength, never very robust at any time. Employment was plentiful if pensions and bills were always in arrears. The King and Queen gave many commissions, though the King did not in some cases scruple to cut down with his own hand the charges as presented in the painter's account. Still in spite of these drawbacks Van Dyck added to his matchless series of portraits of Charles I., the famous *Roi à la Chasse*, now in the Louvre, and the portrait of Charles I. in three positions, which was sent to Rome to the famous sculptor, in order that Bernini might make a bust of the King. Bernini's bust when completed gave such satisfaction, that the Queen expressed to the sculptor her wish to have a bust of herself also. For this purpose Van Dyck painted two portraits of her, but they seem never to have been sent to Rome, and are now in the royal collection of Windsor Castle.

It was moreover not only portraits that Van Dyck painted for the King and Queen, for it is recorded that he painted for the King such pictures as *The Dance of the Muses with Apollo on Parnassus*, *Apollo flaying Marsyas*, *Venus and Adonis* (perhaps the picture now belonging to Sir Francis Cook), and *David playing the Harp before Saul*, in which last picture a portrait of Nicholas Lanier was introduced as David. For the Queen, Van Dyck painted a version of *The Holy Family with a Dance of Angels*, which seems to have passed from the royal collection eventually into that of Sir Robert Walpole at Houghton, and was sold with other pictures to the Empress of Russia. This picture is one of the finest of Van Dyck's sacred works, displaying the art of the painter in its full maturity, and also, while not losing in originality of design and conception, shewing how powerfully the blending influences of Titian and Rubens had influenced the development of Van Dyck's genius.

One of Van Dyck's best portraits of this date is the group of the two poets, *Killigrew and Carew*, painted in 1638, and now at Windsor Castle. Killigrew, actor and jester, as well as poet, was the subject of more than one picture by Van Dyck, the best known being that now at Chatsworth, in which he is depicted with his hand on the head of a great hound.

"Open table for one's friends and open pockets for one's mistresses," as Van Dyck said ironically to his royal patron, "soon shew the bottom of the exchequer." The painter's luxurious life was undermining his health. It is said also that he further damaged his constitution by a futile application to alchemy and the black arts, induced thereto by his close friend, Sir Kenelm Digby. There is nothing inherently improbable in this tradition, the pursuit of alchemy being somewhat in vogue at the moment and by no means unattractive to so impressionable and almost feminine a nature as that of Van Dyck.

Charles and Henrietta Maria thought however that a legitimate alliance in marriage might rescue the painter from the sway of Margaret Lemon and other sirens of her class. They found him a bride in the person of Mary Ruthven, daughter of one Patrick Ruthven, a physician, granddaughter to the Earl of Gowrie, niece to the second wife of Lodovick Stuart, Duke of Lenox, and first cousin to the famous Marquess of Montrose. By this marriage Van Dyck became related to some of the noblest families in

Scotland. Various portraits by Van Dyck have been stated to represent his wife, the most trustworthy perhaps being that with a *viol da gamba*, now at Munich. Tradition says that Margaret Lemon was so infuriated at the news of Van Dyck's intended marriage, that she attempted to ruin with a pair of scissors his working hand.

Fresh mortifications however awaited Van Dyck. A scheme was set on foot for re-decorating the royal banqueting hall at Whitehall, and Van Dyck hoped that the commission might have been entrusted to him. Part of the scheme consisted in depicting on the walls the ceremonies at a chapter of the Knights of the Garter. These would have been either painted on the walls, or carried out in tapestry to be made in the royal tapestry works at Mortlake. Van Dyck made a sketch of the procession of the Knights (now at Belvoir Castle), but the whole scheme fell through. It is possible to detect in the later portraits of himself, such as those in the Louvre, at Florence, and the double portrait of himself and the Earl of Bristol, in the Prado Gallery at Madrid, or the well-known portrait of himself pointing to a sunflower, the *tournesol* of fortune, of which several versions exist, the traces of a life made up of pleasure and hard work, the mingling of the artist, courtier, and voluptuary.

An event occurred in June 1640, which might have proved a turning point in the career of Van Dyck. Rubens died at Antwerp, leaving his school and pupils without a head and numerous commissions unfinished. There was only one painter who could fill his place: Van Dyck. On receipt of this invitation Van Dyck left England for Antwerp in September 1640, and it would appear that he began to make arrangements for a final return to his native city. He was entertained with unusual honour by his brother-artists of the Guild of St. Luke. Among the commissions not completed by Rubens before his death was a series of paintings for the King of Spain. The commission was offered to Van Dyck, who declined to merely finish Rubens's work, though he expressed his willingness to execute the whole commission anew himself. Nothing seems to have been settled, the painter being now very difficult to manage, due partly to his broken health, and partly to the fact that his pride and ambition were greatly increased by the removal of Rubens. In 1641, early in the year, Van Dyck was tempted to go to Paris, where a

project was on foot to decorate the Louvre with paintings. In this project Van Dyck saw a possibility of obtaining such a commission as Rubens had received in the case of the Luxembourg Palace. He was destined however to a mortifying disappointment, for the work was entrusted to the native painter Nicolas Poussin.

Van Dyck returned to London in November 1641, thoroughly broken in health and spirits. His friends viewed his condition with some alarm. The King sent his own physician to try and save Van Dyck's life, but his health continued to get worse. On December 1, 1641, his wife gave birth to a daughter in their house at Blackfriars. Three days later Van Dyck made his will. On December 9th, the same day that his daughter was baptized under the name of Justiniana, the great painter died at Blackfriars, aged 42 years eight months and seven days. On December 11 he was buried by his own direction in St. Paul's Cathedral, near the tomb of John of Gaunt, where a monument was erected to his memory. This monument and the mortal remains of Sir Anthony Van Dyck perished with the Cathedral in the Great Fire of 1666.

XV

The will made by Sir Anthony Van Dyck is preserved in the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury at Somerset House (151 Evelyn). In it the painter directs that his body should be buried in St. Paul's Cathedral. His "moneys meanes and goodes, the which I have nowe lyeinge and remayninge in Antwerpe" and left in the hands of his sister Susanna, he leaves with certain exceptions partly to his said sister to enable her to maintain his "young Daughter by name Maria Teresa Van Dyke," and partly his sister Isabella. After the decease of Susanna and the young daughter, the money was all to come to his "lawfull Daughter borne here in London." All his estate and goods in England were bequeathed to his wife "Lady Maria Van Dyke" and his daughter "new borne in London," and in the event of the latter's death her share was to go to his daughter in Antwerp. Should both his daughters die without issue the Antwerp estate was to go after his wife's death to the children of his sister Catharina "married with S[r] Adrian Diercke." The executors of the will were his wife, Mrs. Catharina Cowley, who was appointed guardian to his daughter, and Aurelius de Meghem, apparently a notary. It was proved on December 13 following.

Van Dyck's widow was much courted, and took to her second husband Sir Richard Pryse, Bart., of Gogerddan in Wales. She however died in 1645, four years after her first husband. Her daughter Justiniana was married at the age of twelve, in 1653, to Sir John Baptist Stepney, Bart., of Pendergast, Pembrokeshire. She inherited a talent for painting from her father, and in 1660 was received into the Roman Church at Antwerp. Her three daughters followed the example of their grandfather's sisters and

became *béguines*. At the Restoration, Lady Stepney claimed and was granted the same pension as her father, the painter, had enjoyed, namely £200 a year, but she appears from various petitions to have secured little more than a barren honour. Her son, Sir Thomas Stepney, inherited the baronetcy, and was the ancestor of a family, which is now represented by the descendants of the sisters of the last baronet, Elizabetha Bridgetta, wife of Joseph Gulston, M.P., and Justina Maria, the wife first of Francis Head and secondly of Andrew Cowell, and it is in the descendants of these two ladies that the descent from Van Dyck is vested.

Maria Theresa, the daughter in Antwerp aforesaid, was married in 1641 to Gabriel Essers Van Bouchart of Antwerp, and left children who assumed the name of Essers Van Dyck.

XVI

In reviewing the life and work of a painter like Van Dyck, it is difficult to know where exactly to place him in the ranks of the great artists of the world. In portraiture he ranks among the first with Rembrandt and Velazquez. In history he cannot be said to have attained the highest rank, though his paintings of this class have been unduly depreciated. He was no pioneer of art, like Van Eyck, Dürer, or Velazquez, he was no monarch of painting, like Raphael, Titian, Rubens, or Rembrandt. Yet Van Dyck, without originating anything, while appropriating the ideas of others, or the prevailing fashion of a country or a people, created a new world of his own in painting, and in England at all events diverted the whole trend of painting into a new and different course. The lineage in art is direct and well defined, which connects Van Dyck with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough. At Antwerp he was overshadowed by the colossal genius of Rubens, but in London he found no rival, and remains unequalled to this day.

Van Dyck, in fact, though lacking in some of the elements of greatness, was perhaps the most consummate artist that ever lived, and one of the greatest masters of style in painting. As a draughtsman and as a painter he is never at fault. Decision and brilliancy are to be found on equal terms in his painting. There is no ignoble or mean touch in them, no dallying with the grosser side of humanity, leading perhaps even to an exaggeration of refinement and nobility in his portraits. This is particularly evident in the portraits painted by him during his visit to Brussels in 1534.

It must however be admitted that the portraits painted by

Van Dyck in London during the last three or four years of his life shew a certain falling-off in artistic merit. The hand of the pupil and assistant is far too evident. It is clear that the painter allowed portraits to go forth from his studio under his name, which are by no means worthy of his brush. This careless negligence opened the way to the immense multiplication of Van Dyck portraits by his assistants during the Commonwealth and the early years of the Restoration, when the romantic sentiment for the Cavalier cause reached its highest point.

His finest qualities appear in the celebrated series of engraved heads, known as the "Iconographie" of Van Dyck. The history of this series is as follows. Among the arts which specially flourished at Antwerp, was that of the engraver. Rubens had cherished and developed this school under his own supervision, and for the reproduction of his own works, and had thereby raised the more mechanical side of engraving, that of mere reproduction, to be a fine art in itself. Van Dyck was connected with this school at an early age, and profited like Rubens by the multiplication and disposal of his works. Publishers sought to supply the public demand for engraving, and portraits were the wares most eagerly sought for. Martin Van den Enden was one of these publishers, and he ventured on a series of portraits engraved entirely from drawings by Van Dyck of important personages at the time. It is possible that Van Dyck may have originated the idea of this publication, and he certainly seems to have borne part or all of the expense. Like Dürer and Holbein, he felt the same impulse to draw the portraits of his contemporaries for his own pleasure. The set was divided into three classes, *Princes and Warriors*, *Politicians and Savants*, *Artists and Amateurs*, consisting of eighty portraits. For these it would appear that Van Dyck first executed black chalk drawings in bold outline with slight indications of accessories. These drawings, most masterly both in design and execution, were then handed to some other artist, who carried out the whole design in *grisaille* or monochrome. These *grisaille* paintings were then delivered to the engraver, who translated them into black and white. Many of these *grisaille* paintings exist, and are attributed to the hand of Van Dyck himself, but they do not really shew any traces of his own handiwork, and in themselves vary greatly in merit. About 1641 the series of plates with a few additions passed into the hands of

another publisher, Gillis Hendricx, at Antwerp. Van Dyck is now represented as having taken a personal interest in the matter. Whether he had been dissatisfied with the engraver's work or not, he had at some time or another set to work with the needle and etched fifteen portraits with his own hand. These etchings in their original state, as they left his hand, are among the most perfect specimens of the engraver's art in existence, especially his own portrait and that of Snyders. With the needle as with the brush Van Dyck shews himself the true artist. While he interprets character and adds nobility with as great success as in painting, in the actual engraving every stroke is full of meaning and suggestion. Unfortunately the etchings had to be afterwards handed over to others to work up and complete for publication. In 1645, four years after Van Dyck's death, Hendricx published a new edition, the title page of which contains the etched portrait of Van Dyck and bears a statement that the plates were engraved at Van Dyck's expense. This edition consisted of one hundred plates, whence the series is often known as the "Centum Icones."

The plates eventually passed from one publisher to another, appearing with additional plates in various later editions; they are now preserved in the Chalcographie of the Louvre at Paris. The whole series presents an interesting survey of the leading personages in the days of Van Dyck, and differs from similar publications through the admirable presentments which such a genius as that of Van Dyck could alone afford. It is interesting to note, that among the many portraits of artists in the series there are several of painters, who might be reckoned as the direct rivals and antagonists of Van Dyck both at Antwerp and in London, revealing a chivalrous side to Van Dyck's temperament, which his relations to other painters in earlier days would hardly have led one to expect. Another series of engraved portraits by Van Dyck was started by J. Meyssens, a painter and print-seller at Antwerp, but the series does not seem to have been completed as a whole.

In conclusion it may be said, that the position of Van Dyck in art can be reckoned as secure. As a painter of portraits he remains unrivalled, though other painters may have excelled him at times in mere precision, in intimacy, in pathos, or in mere technical skill, as for instance Frans Hals or Velazquez. Van Dyck has left a great part of the history of his time in his portraits,

especially that of England. It is written moreover in a language which can be understood by all. It would be difficult perhaps to over-estimate the influence that the portraits by Van Dyck have exercised upon the minds of the English aristocracy as to partisanship with the rival factions of the great Civil War. So closely identified is he with the history of that time, so entirely did he revolutionise the painter's art in England, and establish a tradition of his own, that the English race has learnt to look upon him almost as much an English painter as Sir Joshua Reynolds or Gainsborough. It is the more surprising therefore to think that during the twenty-five years of his career as a painter, only some seven years were spent in England, and that the portraits comprised within his English period cannot invariably be reckoned among his most satisfactory works. Yet there will be few found, who do not echo the somewhat fulsome praise of the poet Waller :

> " Strange that thy Hand should not inspire
> The Beauty only, but the Fire :
> Not the Form alone, and Grace,
> But Act and Power of a Face."

End of Part II

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NOTE.—The Publishers gratefully record their indebtedness to Messrs. George Bell & Sons, whose Photographs have been used for Plates II., V., VI., VIII., X., XIII., XV., and XVII. in Part I., and Plates V., VII., XII., XIV., XV., and XVI. in Part II.

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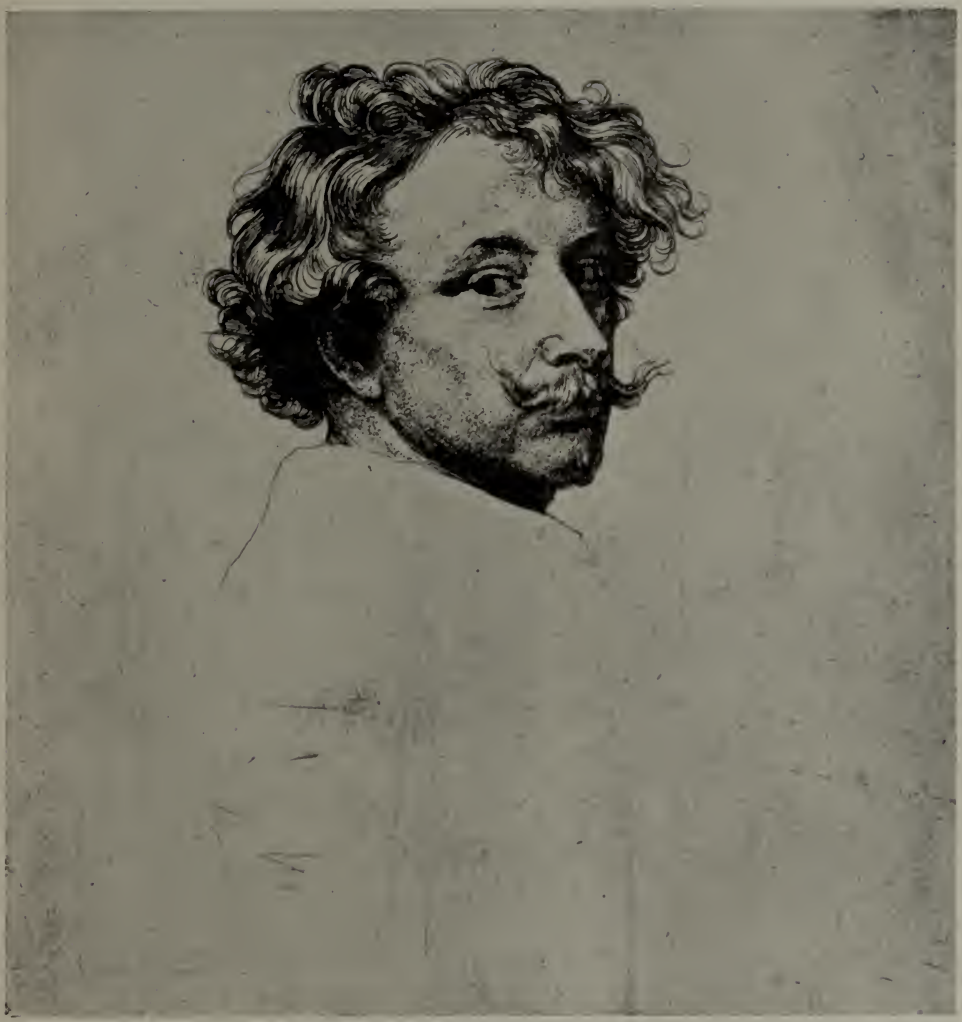

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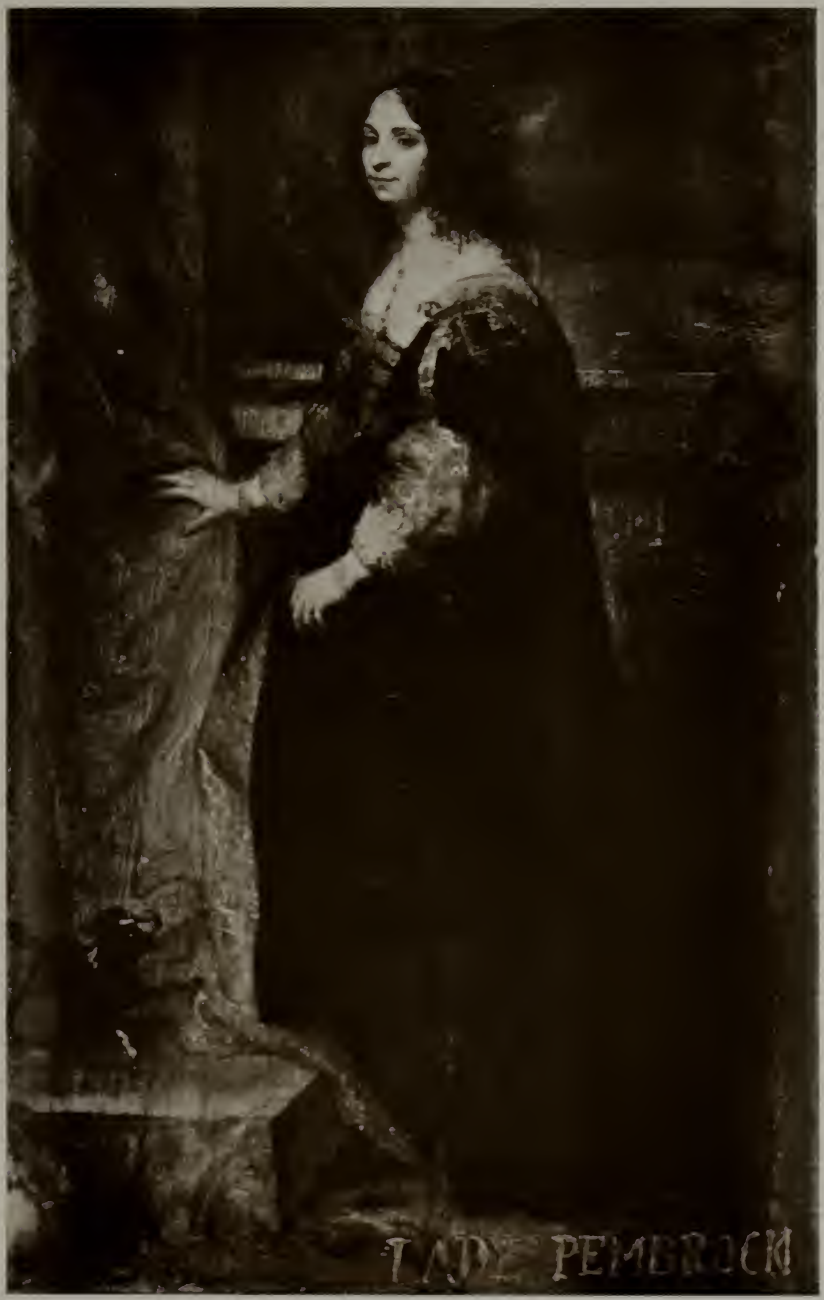

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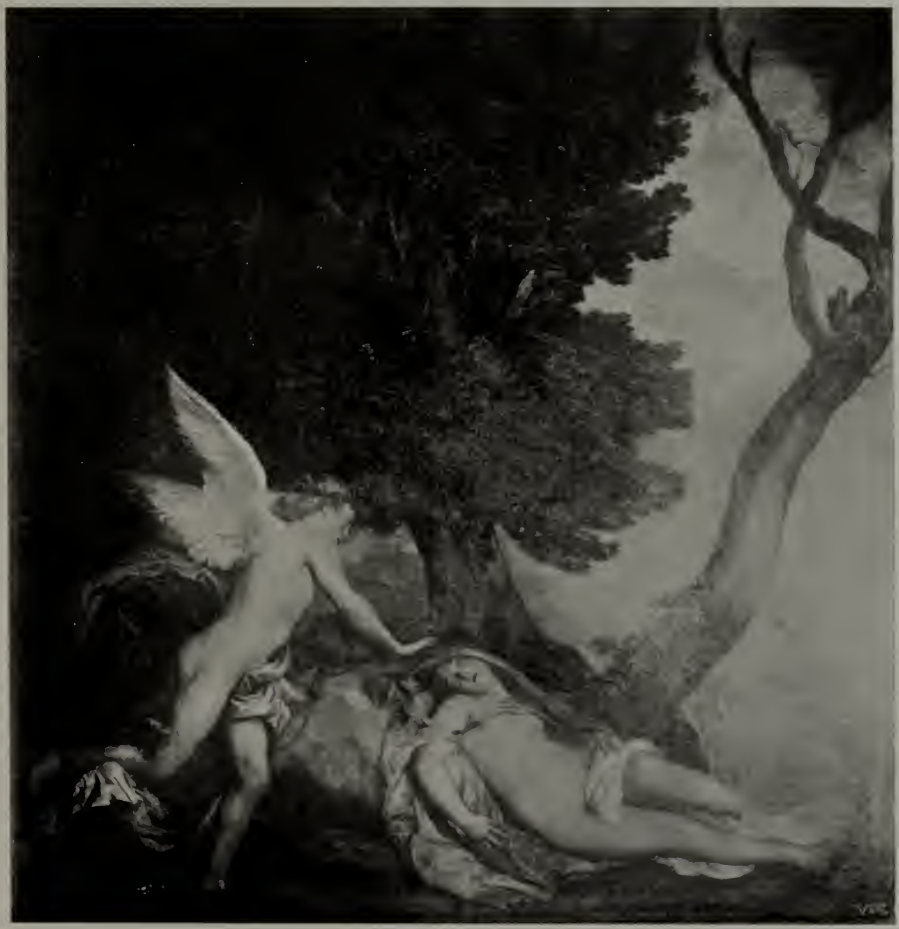

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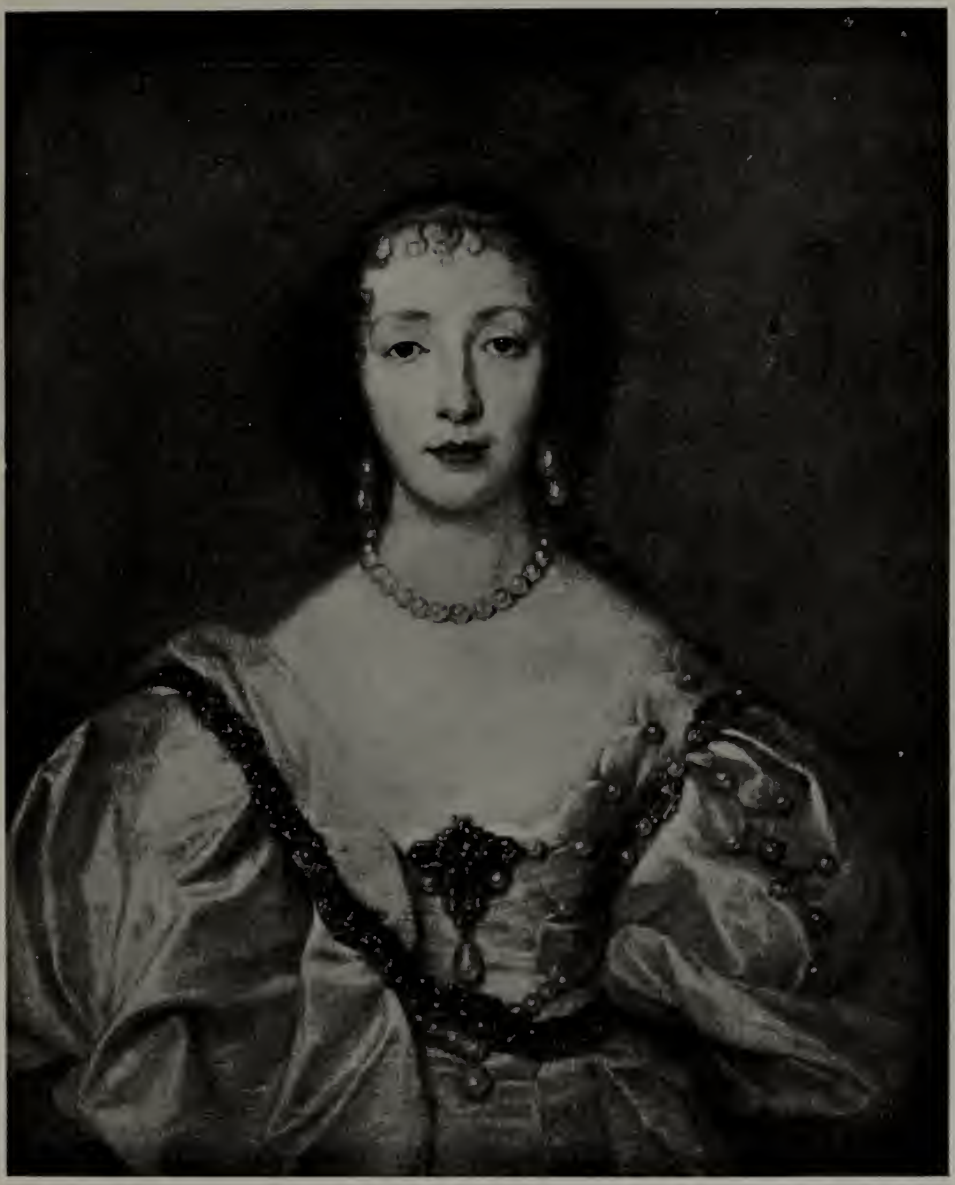

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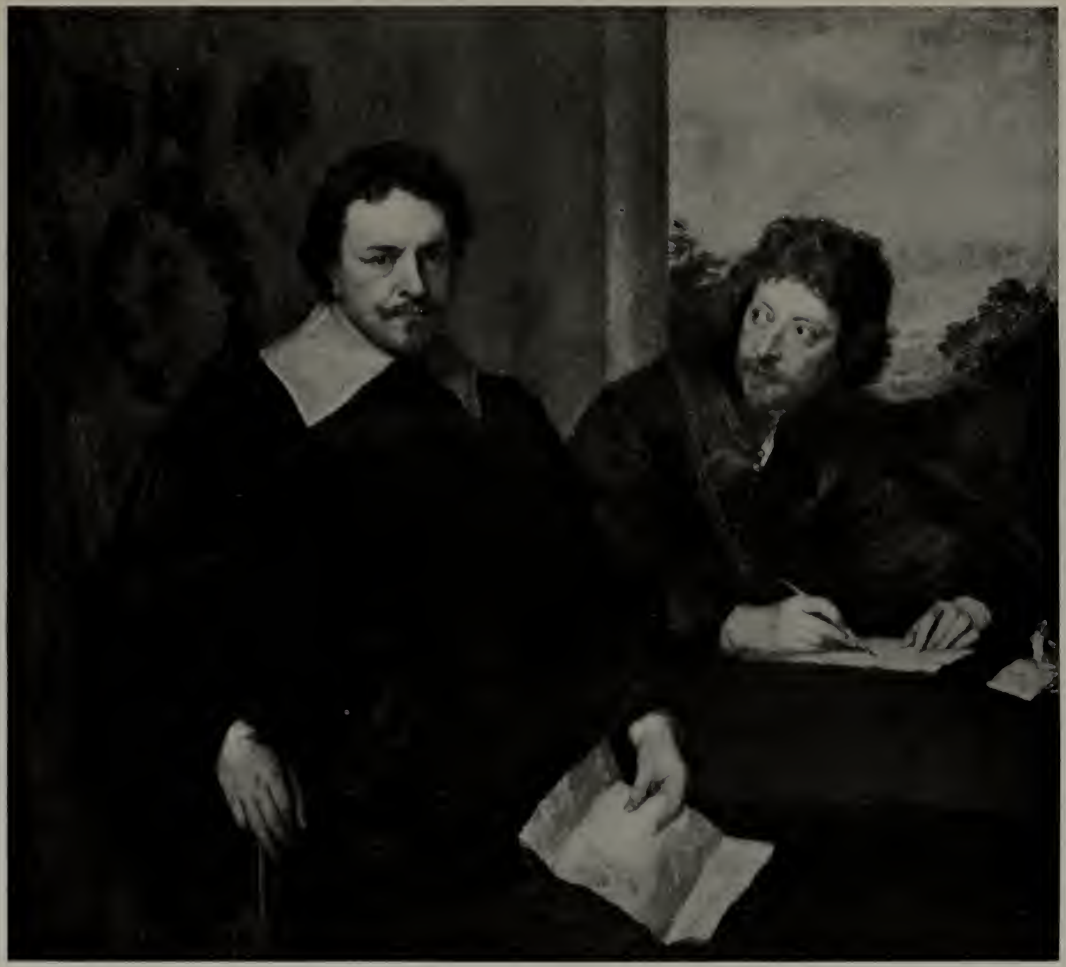

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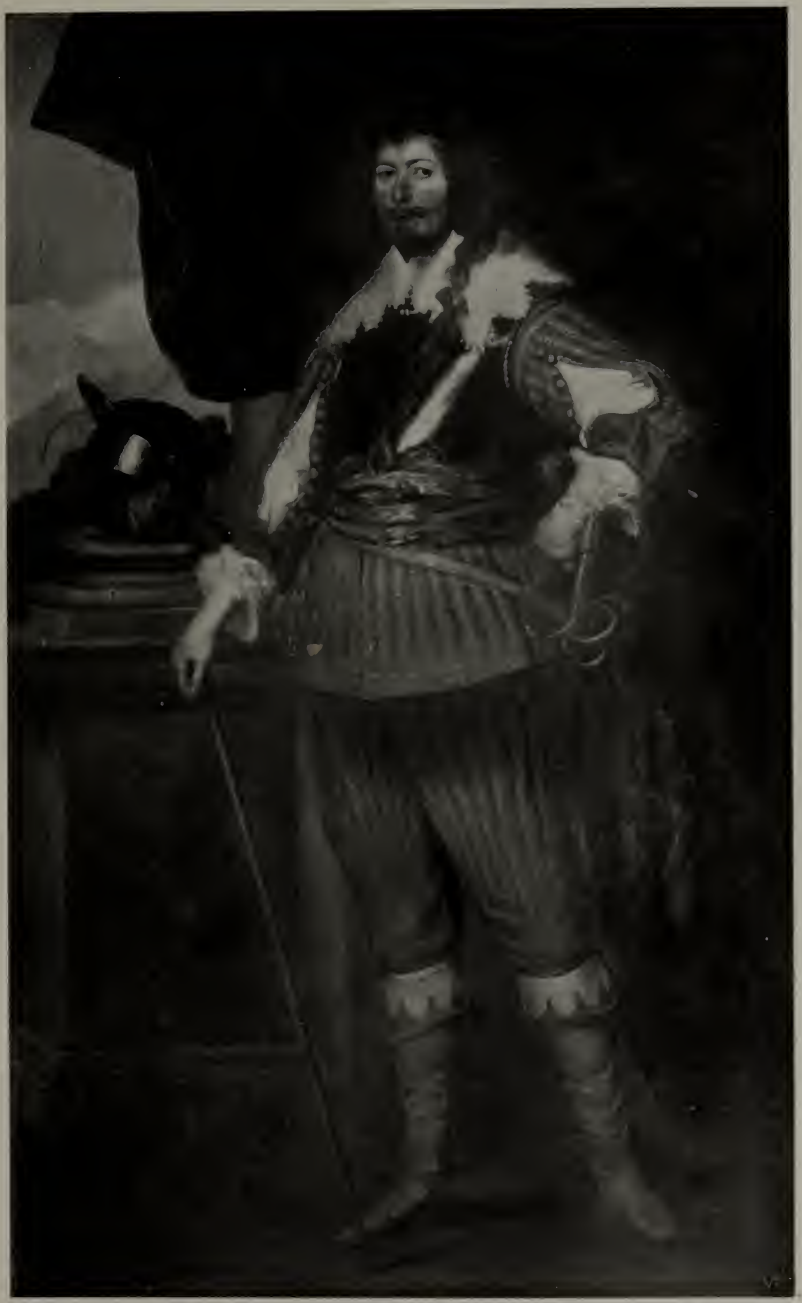

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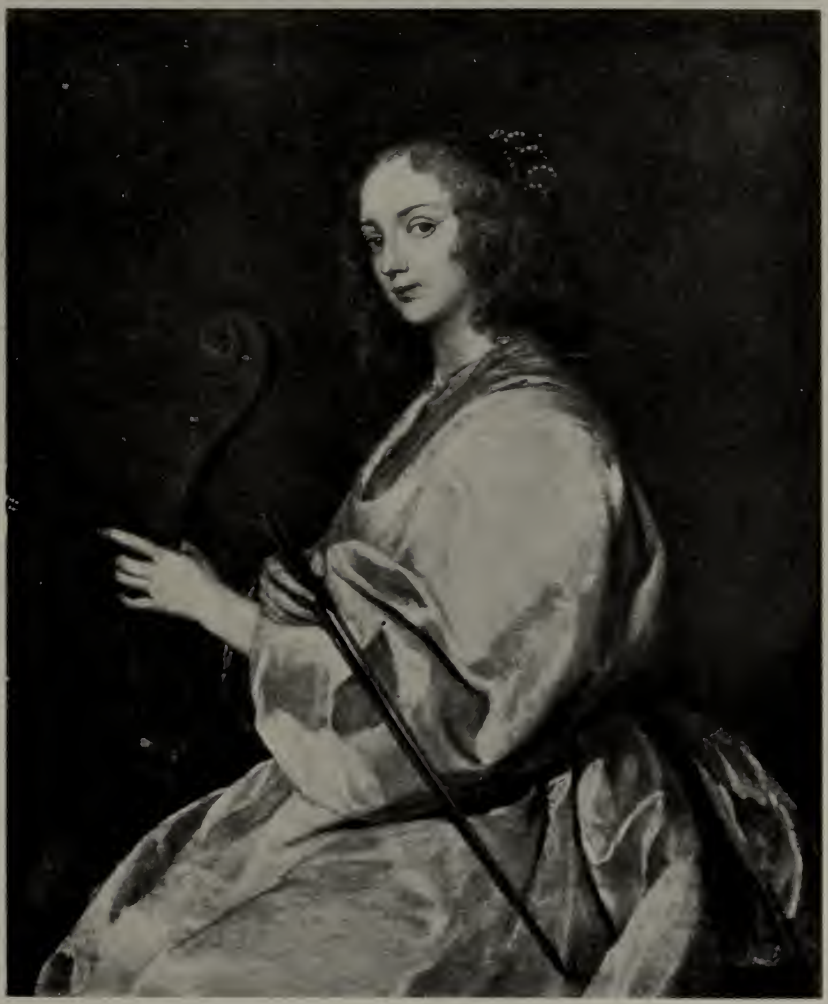

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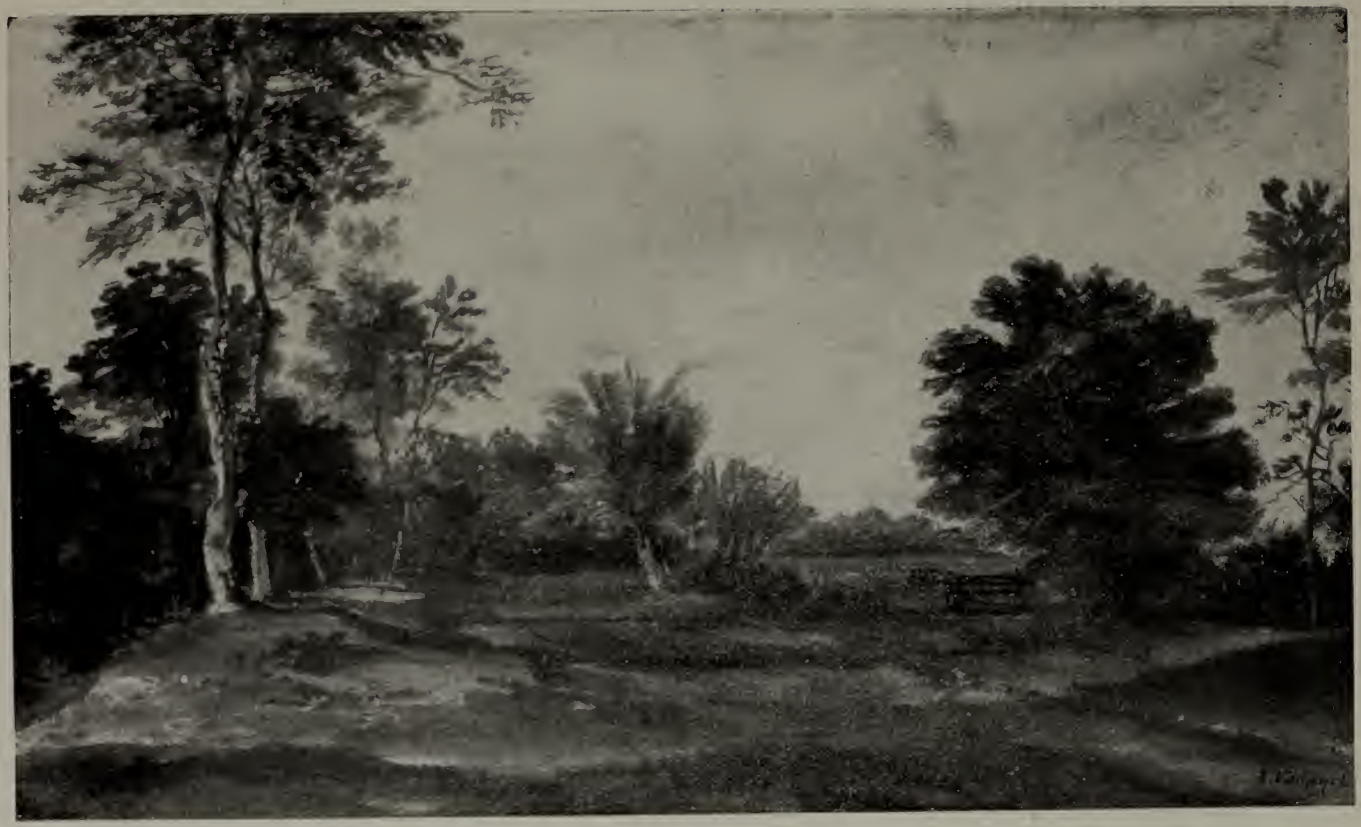

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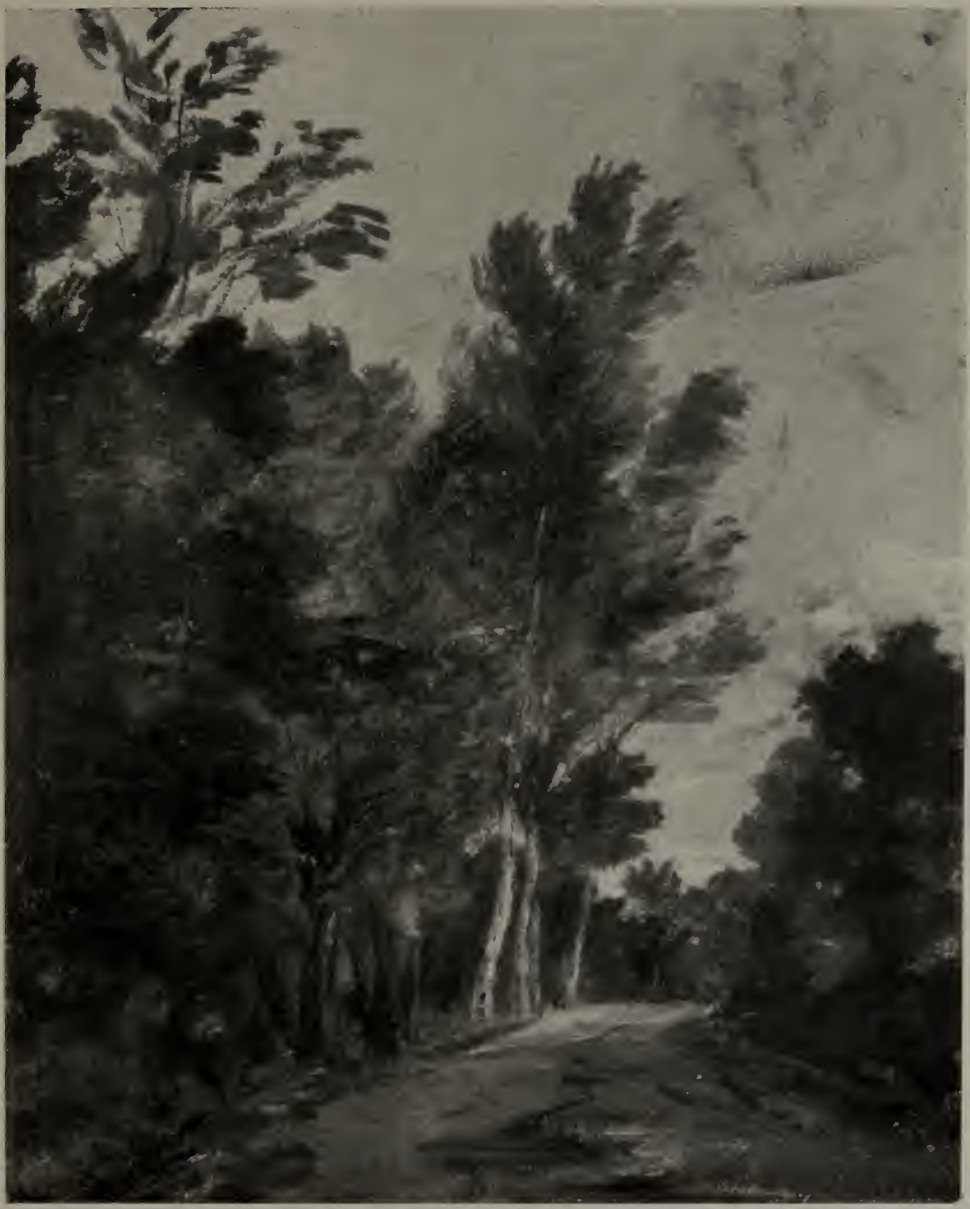

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